

COUNTY NEWS



PUBLISHED FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

November 2003

Firestorm 2003 Disaster Finds County Employees on the Front Lines

In the pre-dawn on Sunday, Oct. 26, the telephones of County employees started to ring.

Hundreds of County workers were mobilized that first day, and in the coming week, to deal with the worst fire disaster in California history: sheriff's deputies evacuated people in the fire zones, and Animal Services officers cared for four-legged and winged evacuees. The County's Emergency Operations Center was activated at 6 a.m. as a focal point of disaster management and information for the region.

Damage assessment teams quickly fanned out to devastated neighborhoods. County staff monitored air quality and advised the public on precautions to take, including whether their children should go trick-or-treating on Halloween. And seemingly overnight as the fires waned, "one-stop shops" for fire victims sprang up in Alpine, Valley Center and Ramona to help the victims put their lives back together.



San Diego County Emergency Operations Center.

County News talked to four employees about their experiences on the front lines during the worst of the wildfires.

Even as the Cedar Fire raged, damage assessment teams led by the Department of Planning and Land Use began conducting "windshield surveys."

Kathi Skilbeck, a supervising building inspector with DPLU, was in Lakeside two days into the fire disaster to take measurements of the destroyed homes, photograph the ruins and collect information that would later help homeowners claim reimbursement by insurance companies and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA.

"On Tuesday (Oct. 28th) it looked like Mars or the moon or something," said Skilbeck, describing the fire-scarred landscape.

"I was really sad to see people lose so much so quickly," she said. As the DPLU teams did their work, she said, they encountered people digging through the rubble to look for family valuables. While they were in shock at first, they soon became very emotional.

"Almost every place we went to on Tuesday, I knew the people because I've been



Manuel Ainza, Damage Assessment Team.
(For more Firestorm 2003 photos please check out County News Extra online, [cww](#) - click on County News.)

with the County so long," said Skilbeck. "It's the most devastating thing I've ever seen."

While doing their jobs, the damage assessment teams had to watch out for downed power lines and flare-ups, and they wore masks and goggles to protect them from the smoke that lingered in the air.

"My eyes, I don't think, will ever be the same," she said.

Animal Control Field Officer Kathy Conwell got the call at 2:15 a.m. on Sunday, Oct. 26. She joined her colleagues in Valley Center soon after, and began evacuating horses. They also helped warn residents of the danger.

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Nonprofit Groups Put Employees' CECO Donations to Good Use

Laurie Leonard says a \$5,000 grant from the County Employees' Charitable Organization will quickly benefit the homeless people she serves.

"I'm cooking meatloaf for 200. All they get is pasta. These guys never get meat," said Leonard.

Leonard is executive director of The Welcome Door, a Pacific Beach-based nonprofit that helps homeless people through a free weekly dinner, hotel vouchers for families and forays into homeless encampments to

hand out clothing, insect repellent (to protect against West Nile virus) and other necessities.

"This money that (CECO) gave us, you have no idea how much it will help," said Leonard, whose group got one of 77 grants handed out by CECO at its annual banquet at Tom Ham's Lighthouse on Oct. 8.

This year's grants totaled \$237,000, including a \$25,000 award to the Government Employees Crisis Fund, which assists County employees facing a temporary hardship.

CECO is funded entirely by donations from County employees through payroll deductions, and run by volunteers. Every dollar donated by employees goes directly to a local charity, and the money is used for tangible items, such as equipment and supplies.

The guests at this year's luncheon included Board of Supervisors Chairman Greg Cox, Supervisor Bill Horn, and Dr. Rodger Lum, director of the Health and Human Services

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NewsBriefs

Wish Upon Amazon

County residents who want to support the San Diego County Library can now do so by visiting online bookseller Amazon.com, clicking on "Wish Lists" and then typing in San Diego County Library. The library has joined a growing number of public libraries and schools that are using the online service to increase donations from library supporters. Those who want to help their local library can simply pull up the online wish list, select a book, movie or CD for purchase, and have the item sent directly to the library of their choice. Under a pilot program, eight of the library's 32 branches have posted wish lists.

New Intranet Site Makes Debut

Check out the new County Wide Web (CWW). It features a fresh, user-friendly design and contains new features along with familiar resources. In the Employee Messages area, you will find links to all-employee e-mails sent in the previous 30 days; there is a new Events Calendar; and you can link to County Internet sites. The employee telephone directory and important County reference documents are still available. You can also customize your CWW page for quick access to information you use frequently. If you have any questions, contact your department's Web Activities Group representative.

Quick Thinking May Have Saved a Life

Public Works Road Crew Supervisor Steve Thompson may have saved the life of a man who nearly entered a diabetic coma last month. Thompson was on duty at the Lakeside road station when he noticed that a rental sweeper, there to fill its water tank, hadn't moved in more than 30 minutes. On closer inspection, he saw the operator was slumped over. As he was taught in first aid training, Thompson checked to see if the man was conscious. He immediately called paramedics and stayed with the man until help arrived. Public Works staff learned the man was treated at a local hospital and is expected to recover.

Ranch is County's Newest Acquisition

The County of San Diego is celebrating the recent acquisition of Boulder Oaks Ranch, which will be preserved as open space. The habitat land is a 1,215-acre property about six miles south of Ramona off Mussey Grade Road. The land is a species-rich patchwork of coastal sage, grasslands and oak woodlands. It is home to mule deer, ring-tailed cats, golden eagles and the endangered California gnatcatcher, and will be preserved as permanent open space. The acquisition brings the County's ambitious habitat preservation plan – the award-winning Multiple Species Conservation Program, or MSCP – closer to its overall goal of setting aside 100,000 acres of meaningful open space for future generations.

See the online version of County News for more News Briefs



In Walt's Words

County Employees Shine in Time of Crisis

Words can't explain the feelings that have engulfed us since the disastrous wildfires struck San Diego County on October 25. Thousands of our friends and neighbors lost their homes, and many lost their lives, as the firestorms swept through our County.

There were acts of bravery and kindness. Strangers helped strangers get through the dark nights as San Diegans struggled to accept the new, charred landscape of the place we call home.

The employees of the County of San Diego were right in the middle of it all. The firestorms affected us whether we were among the unfortunate fire victims, knew someone who was, or simply did our jobs. As you read this, the flames have been quenched. But the scars, both inside and out, will take time to heal. The recovery has begun; but I want to look back just briefly to acknowledge and thank all of you who rose to the occasion, and tried to make a bad situation a little better.

When the fires roared through the neighborhoods of San Diego County, you, the employees of County government, were everywhere. You were at the Emergency Operations Center, which ran like a Swiss watch. You were at the Red Cross shelters offering health care and mental health services. You were out in the fire areas, helping to save lives and property. You were caring for lost and injured animals, from livestock to family pets. Even as the fires still burned in some areas, you were out combing through the rubble, beginning the necessary work to speed recovery for the victims.

You put yourselves at risk to move the abused and neglected children at Polinsky Children's Center to a safe place, and you kept the public informed about the potential health impacts of the acrid smoke in the air. You also had the sad job of removing, in a dignified manner, the bodies of those who perished.

Once the heroic firefighters had tamed the inferno, you sprang into action setting up one-stop shops for those who needed help. The Local Assistance Centers in Alpine, Ramona and Valley Center are a marvel of efficiency. In one room, fire victims can find help with everything from County permits for rebuilding, tax relief and emergency food, shelter and clothing.

From my vantage point at the EOC, I could only watch with admiration and gratitude. You showed yourselves to be true professionals in every way. Many of the thousands of you who took part in this effort won't find your actions chronicled in the newspapers or on TV. But you should know that your efforts are appreciated.

You did the County proud. You are the best. Let's hope it's a long time until we are tested like this again.

Walt Ekard
Chief Administrative Officer

Firestorm 2003

(continued from page 1)

"We were out there hollering and screaming, 'It's coming,'" she said. "It was a big, hot glow coming at us."

Conwell and her fellow officers evacuated 30 horses the first day, along with dogs, goats, sheep and any other creatures they could load into trailers or their patrol vehicles.

Because of her knowledge of the back country, Conwell said, she has a mental map of the area, and kept possible escape routes in mind as she worked. "You don't want to get stuck somewhere."

She had high praise for her colleagues, who all put in long hours under sometimes dangerous conditions to protect animals in the fire zone.

"I work with a tremendous group of people."

Jack Walsh and Judith Hays-Zavala were among dozens of public health nurses assigned to evacuation shelters, Walsh in Poway and Hays-Zavala in Campo.

Walsh found himself within about 100 yards of a sky-high wall of flame as he and the husband of a woman in the Red Cross shelter raced to the couple's home to retrieve an oxygen pump the woman needed. Things were tense at the shelter the night of Sunday, Oct. 26, when no one knew which way the fire would turn next.

"From the shelter you could see flames on the hill, it was quite dramatic," Walsh said.

Walsh and his fellow nurses evaluated people at the shelter, dealing with everything from breathing problems to assisting people who left their homes without their medication.

"It kind of puts things in perspective, and makes your regular job a little easier," Walsh said, and drove home the importance of preparation for a disaster.

Hays-Zavala was out of town during the first weekend of the fire. She worked in an East County shelter as firefighters began to get a handle on the blazes. She was impressed by the resilience and strength of those she encountered, many of whom had lost their homes. She assisted people with chronic illnesses, but also took time to listen to their stories.

"I just felt inspired by those people. They gave more to me than I gave to them," she said. "I was inspired by their spirit and their sense of community."

CECO (continued from page 1)

Agency and this year's CECO campaign chairman.

"The payroll contribution is painless," said Phyllis House-Cepeda, CECO president and an HHS employee.

"They're making a difference," she said of employees who contribute to CECO. "Their \$2, or \$5 a pay period turns into \$237,000. It's phenomenal to think what we can do for our own community."

Following the banquet, The Crime Victims Fund, which was awarded \$2,500 for emergency assistance to crime victims, wrote a thank-you note to CECO.

"As a County employee, I wanted you to know how much The Crime Victims Fund

appreciates the efforts that you, your co-workers and CECO make in helping local charities. CECO has much to be proud of in making a real difference in the lives of our fellow San Diegans," wrote Bob Marinaccio, the group's executive director.

This year's grants went to a wide variety of nonprofit groups from around San Diego County, and their representatives expressed gratitude to CECO as the grant checks were handed out.

Among the grants was a \$5,000 award to Catholic Charities for transportation for seniors; \$3,000 to the Border View YMCA for scholarships for 25 children to attend before- and after-school child care; \$2,000 to Mid-City Community Clinic, to provide medicine

[Ver•ba•tim]

Letters from satisfied customers served by County employees.

Mike Rolan (Probation Department) received praise for the help and guidance provided to a client and his mother as well as for securing funds for clothing and shoes.

"Mike's approach with my son, a combination of discipline, attention, guidance and caring has been amazingly effective. Due to his wisdom, my son and myself have benefited more than I can say."

The **Registrar of Voters** staff was thanked by a grateful citizen for their effective and efficient handling of the recall election.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you for all you did so the election could happen. Amazing!"

Kevin Heaton and **Jim Schuck** (Environmental Health) were thanked by officials with the downtown ballpark project for their diligence.

"We appreciate all of the extra efforts on your part to get the approval of the reuse of the soils in the Park at the Park... Your efforts helped to keep the project on schedule and that is important to the redevelopment team."

Ed Wortham (HHS) received the heartfelt gratitude of a woman he assisted.

"Thank you so much for your sincere consideration when we spoke. Your call was so uplifting, it brought tears to my eyes."

Cindy Douglas (Auditor & Controller) was thanked by a fellow County department - Child Support Services - for excellent customer service.

"Cindy always gets back to us in a timely manner and always provides information on solving issues, or refers us to someone who can help us. If she is not aware of the solution for an issue, she always makes a point to obtain the answer for us."

Check out the online version of County News for more Verbatim.

for children; \$2,684 to St. Claire's Home for three new air conditioning units, a stove, a fax machine, diapers and supplies and educational materials; \$2,800 to the Crossroad Foundation for a new commercial refrigerator for food storage; and \$3,000 to the San Diego County Employees Child Care Center to install new carpeting.

CECO was founded in 1956, and over its history has donated more than \$15 million to local charities.

Next year's CECO campaign, in coordination with the United Way, will begin in late January.

For more information about CECO, contact Phyllis House-Cepeda at (619) 338-2765, or log on to www.sdcountry.ca.gov/cao.

NEWSMakers NEWSMakers

Linda Wong-Kerberg of the Office of Violence Prevention (HHSA) was honored with the 2003 Andrea O'Donnell Award on Oct. 13 during the San Diego Domestic Violence Council's "Not-to-be-Forgotten" rally. She was recognized for her leadership in developing programs to reduce family and youth violence.

Purchasing and Contracting has earned the Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award for 2003 from the National Purchasing Institute. The award recognizes innovation, professionalism, productivity and leadership in procurement.

The California Environmental Health Association thanks **Pamela Raptis** of DEH for her donation of \$1,500 to the CEHA Scholarship and Development Fund. Raptis won online contest that tested her recycling knowledge.

Apply Online for County Jobs 24/7

The Department of Human Resources has launched its new e-applications on the Web - www.sdcounty.ca.gov/hr. Now it's easier than ever for current employees and others to apply for County jobs by filling out and submitting the application and supplemental paperwork online. E-applications also allow your information to be used for subsequent applications. If you need help, contact Human Resources at (619) 236-2191.

Howard Blackson of Planning and Land Use was recognized by Citizens for Century 3 with this year's Ruocco Award.

Tamara Lave of the Public Defender's Office finished third among American women in a marathon that was part of the World Championship of Track and Field in Paris, France. Meanwhile, four employees from HHSA, **Velia Fematt, Melisa Sosa, Yolanda Cano** and **Sara Reyes**, completed the Maui Marathon in Hawaii.

John Clements of General Services spoke to a conference of fleet management professionals about some of the secrets of his fleet's success, after it was named best-run fleet by the California State Association of Counties.

Aging and Independence Services' Feeling Fit Club Program will receive the Industry Innovators Award from the International Council on Active Aging.

Burn Survivor's Trials Give Her The Strength to Help Others

Daisy Mayers marvels at her own ability to pick up a glass with her right hand and take a drink.

A simple movement that wouldn't even rate a second thought for most people is special to Mayers, because she couldn't do it for much of her life.

"It's a joy, it's a miracle," said Mayers.

Mayers seems to approach nearly every aspect of her life with a similar sense of gratitude and wonderment. Her attitude has enabled her to turn early childhood tragedies into strengths that she now uses to help others.

Mayers, 41, is a protective services assistant with the County Health and Human Services Agency. A native of Costa Rica, Mayers suffered severe burns to much of her body when she was an infant. She was hospitalized for a full year, and she surprised her doctors. "They didn't think I would live."

And that wasn't all. When she was 2, her mother abandoned Mayers and her two older siblings. Luckily, she was taken in by an elderly woman in her village, who raised her and instilled the values that have shaped her life.

These values helped her strive for a career that she always dreamed of, helping children who have been abused or neglected. She has achieved her goal, and more, by refusing to be an object of pity, by herself or anyone else.

"Don't pity me, I have inside my heart the potential. I can do things," she said.

That outlook has allowed Mayers to help children, first at the County's Hillcrest Receiving Home and Polinsky Children's Center, and now, in her role with Child Protective Services. Her job is to supervise visits between children and their parents, drive children to appointments, serve as a Spanish-language translator, and other duties.

She also volunteers as a fund-raiser and speaker for the San Diego Burn Institute and other groups, such as the American Intercultural Student Exchange. With the exchange program, her volunteer work consists of mediating disputes between exchange students and their host families.

She's accomplished all this while undergoing more than 20 operations to her hand and scalp. The operations have allowed her to gain the use of her right hand and grow hair over most of her head. She was told the burns were caused when her mother, an alcoholic, accidentally ignited rubbing alcohol with a candle while giving her daughter a rubdown.

In spite of the difficulties she has faced, Mayers refuses to have a negative viewpoint on life.

"We go through many things in life, but we can overcome them," she said.



Daisy Mayers

County News is published for the 17,000 employees of the County of San Diego.

Board of Supervisors

Greg Cox, District 1
Dianne Jacob, District 2
Pam Slater, District 3
Ron Roberts, District 4
Bill Horn, District 5

Chief Administrative Officer

Walter F. Ekard

This information is available upon request in alternative formats for persons with disabilities.



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COUNTY NEWS *Extra*

Service Awards

Congratulations to County employees reaching the following milestones in November:

30 years

Nicolette J. Gomez (Auditor & Controller)
Manuel Elizondo (Assessor)
Allen M. Williamson (Assessor)
Richard L. Whittlesey (Sheriff)
Marianne Gallagher (District Attorney)
Cheryl L. Valdez (County Library)
Anthony A. Jankola (Dept of Public Works)
Richard A. Carlson (Dept of Environmental Health)
Diane G. Lindsay (Health & Human Services)
Stephanie Mortimer (Health & Human Services)
Floyd E. Richardson (Health & Human Services)
Carla S. Roddy (Health & Human Services)
Sandra E. Ross (Health & Human Services)
Christina E. Espinosa (Superior Court)
Kathleen M. Keller (Superior Court)
Mark C. Schecter (Superior Court)
Margaret C. Upsing (Superior Court)

25 years

Stephen P. Eaton (Assessor)
Keith E. Jackson (Sheriff)
John J. Adams (Probation Dept)
Rosita P. Fonteno (Probation Dept)
Wallace B. Hamilton (Probation Dept)
Patricia T. Iwataki (Child Support)
George E. McCandless (Dept of Environmental Health)
Roy M. Nelson (DGS-FAC Management ISF)
Eileen C. Wilson (DGS-FAC Management ISF)
Lacy Annette Black (Health & Human Services)
Gilbert Fierro (Health & Human Services)
Savanith U. Leng (Health & Human Services)
Vincent Rosem-Benavides (Superior Court)
Helen N. Roseberry (Superior Court)
Ederlinda A. Alberto (Air Pollution Control)

20 years

Rosanne Frantz-Gaines (Health & Human Services)
William A. Jimenez (Assessor)
Gary P. Kendrick (Assessor)
Son D. Nguyen (Treasurer-Tax Collector)
Rodolfo O. Agpaoa (Sheriff)
Earle V. Lyons (Sheriff)
Linda Pool (Sheriff)
Nancy G. Wikoff (Sheriff)
Susan Bettina Seabourne (Dept of Public Works)
Natalie G. Gallegos (Health & Human Services)
Melinda A. Leal (Health & Human Services)
Edgardo R. Penaflor (Health & Human Services)
John E. Peterson (Health & Human Services)

County News Extra includes expanded information about and for County employees. If you have something you'd like considered for either *County News* or *County News Extra*, please contact the newsletter editor at (619) 595-4627 or e-mail at countynews@sdcounty.ca.gov. Items can also be faxed to (619) 595-4664 or mailed to MSA-359, Attn: *County News*.

Retirements

The San Diego County Employees Retirement Association reports the following employees recently retired:

Linda D. Bardsley (County Counsel)	Leticia D. Llacuna (Sheriff)
Mildred L. Bennett (Health & Human Services)	Patti H. Loffland (Health & Human Services)
Teresa F. Bennett (Sheriff)	Jim B. Lovewell (Parks & Recreation)
Janet M. Bingham (Auditor& Controller)	Diana M. Machcinski (Health & Human Services)
Conchita Bolado (Sheriff)	Joe H. Maes (Sheriff)
Carol J. Bradford (Treasurer-Tax Collector)	Phyllis Martin (Superior Court)
Mary A. Brown (Health & Human Services)	Gayle McDaniel (District Attorney)
Robert A. Cady	Paul McMullen (Sheriff)
Carol A. Cannon (Health & Human Services)	Randall B. Mecham (Health & Human Services)
Patricia C. Cawthon (Environmental Health)	Alfred Medina (Health & Human Services)
Karen Chillo-Bradley	Linda S. Mitchell (Superior Court)
Estelita T. Corpuz (Health & Human Services)	Bertin B. Moise
Cezar Cudal (Sheriff)	John H. Neal (Sheriff)
Dale L. Cunningham (Superior Court)	Andrew M. Oleary
Vicky L. Czaja (Probation Department)	Jerry D. Peek
Ernesto L. Dimal (Health & Human Services)	Dorothy P. Peripoli (Superior Court)
Francis H. Eaton (District Attorney)	Beverly Prinsen (Probation Department)
Ben Echeverria	Sharon Reed (Planning & Land Use)
Rose C. Edwards (Superior Court)	Douglas W. Ruth (Parks & Recreation)
Charles A. Feland (Probation Department)	Richard F. Schmidt (Facilities Management)
Gary T. Fisher	John C. Seiferth (Sheriff)
Estella V. Gaines (Public Defender)	Amy A. Sheridan (County Technology Office)
Walter S. Goffney (Health & Human Services)	Margot J. Smith (District Attorney)
Charlene G. Hibbard (A4170)	Sharon Smith (Health & Human Services)
Viola K. Jackson (Health & Human Services)	Richard E. Spears (Probation Department)
Gregory H. Jensen (Parks & Recreation)	Tim F. Stuhr (Parks & Recreation)
Milivoj Jovanovich (Public Works)	Helen M. Turner (Superior Court)
Carl R. Killpack (Facilities Management)	Dale E. Wallingford (Auditor & Controller)
Mary D. Landa (Health & Human Services)	Michael H. Wittmer (Sheriff)
Joanne Limneos (Health & Human Services)	

In Memoriam

Mary M. Bradford (County Clerk, 1988)	9/03	James G. Jones (Probation, 1989)	9/03
Roy A. Call (Social Services, 1992)	9/03	Orvil V. Langord (General Services, 1978)	8/03
Margaret Caplinger (Social Services, 2003)	8/03	Erich W. Larisch (Welfare, 1973)	9/03
Florence M. Coleman (District Attorney, 1983)	8/03	Patty D. Leggrone (HHSA)	9/03
David Eden (Assessor, 1976)	9/03	Albert V. Moblard (Welfare, 1980)	8/03
Alyce B. Elliot (Welfare, 1978)	9/03	Margaret J. Morse (Social Services, 1982)	8/03
Margaret L. Fischer (Social Services, 1990)	8/03	Patricio Provencio (Public Works, 1984)	9/03
Mildred Fleming (Auditor & Controller, 1975)	9/03	Minor Thomas Rice (Welfare, 1977)	9/03
Manuel Gonsalves (General Services, 1972)	9/03	Beverly Small (Social Services, 1985)	9/03
Eugene N. Hannah (Education, 1980)	9/03	Joanna P. Smith (Social Services, 1981)	8/03
Milton M. Honda (EDP Services, 1999)	8/03	Lloyd B. Williams (Public Works, 1982)	9/03

[Ver•ba•tim] *extra*

Andrea Carreira (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) received praise for helping a customer with a marriage certificate.

"Ms. Carreira is knowledgeable, courteous, and above all, she was concerned and very helpful."

Linda Wheeler (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) received kudos for helping a customer with his tax bill.

"Thank you again for being such a great help. I am a Seabee and our motto is 'CAN DO.' I think you are also a 'CAN DO Lady.'"

Doug DuBois (General Services) was thanked for helping a fellow County employee.

"Just a short note to tell you again how much I appreciate the speedy turnaround on documents I've sent to General Services for review and/or approval."

Winston McColl, Carla Ozgunduz and Eve Babcock (Purchasing and Contracting) were thanked by another County employee for outstanding customer service.

"The commitment that Winston, Carla and Eve demonstrated today to excellence in customer service and being part of a Countywide team was very obvious – and very much appreciated."

Timothy B. Smith (General Services) was thanked by another department for helping to resolve a problem.

"We really appreciate the 'can do' attitude that Tim brought to the situation as well as the follow-through on the part of his staff."

Patti Weikel (Air Pollution Control District) was thanked for her assistance to another government agency.

"I would like to let you know how much I appreciate Patti's services every time I come to the District for assistance in many projects that

I handle for MCAS Miramar. She has been very reliable and accommodating in helping me with what I need."

Roberto G. Alcantara (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) was the subject of a letter of appreciation from a satisfied customer.

"The customer service I received was really superb."

Jessica Cruz and Ron Graham (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) were thanked for their diligence and expertise.

"I was so impressed with their professionalism, knowledge, and courtesy, not to mention their patience and charismatic demeanor, that I was compelled to write you this letter."

Kenneth Cavanah (General Services) was thanked by another County department for his assistance.

"Mr. Cavanah's assistance made a complicated task much easier and saved hours of work for many officers in our department. On top of this, Mr. Cavanah was cordial, cooperative and professional."

Tanya Obermark (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) was praised for her assistance in helping a customer obtain a certified copy of a birth certificate.

"We would like to take this opportunity to thank your employee, Tanya Obermark, for the professional courtesy and extraordinary service she provided."

Jeannette Notarangelo (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) was complimented for the quality of service she provided.

"She was wonderful. She went beyond the call of duty."

Lourdes Bondoc (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) received a thank you note from a couple who recently got married.

"Thank you for helping us process our marriage papers."

News Briefs Extra

Rainy Day Inspiration

Two Public Works employees have come up with a way to save money and improve safety while keeping tabs on Mother Nature. DPW's Flood Control division is responsible for maintaining a network of 80 rain gauges that are used to provide rainfall totals to the National Weather Service via radio transmitters. The gauges cost \$2,000 apiece, and many need replacement. That's where Mike Jones and Robert Eitel come in. The two have devised a new gauge built with parts from a local home improvement store. The price tag? \$300 apiece. What's more, the new units are sunk into the ground, instead of being mounted at the top of a tall pipe, making them easier and safer to maintain. The new units will be installed soon.

Be a Powerful Voice for a Child

San Diego County's abused and neglected children need your help. Voices for Children is recruiting volunteers to serve as Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) and educational surrogates. Volunteers provide support for children in foster care, appear in court and make recommendations to the judge. Training is provided. CASAs make an 18-month commitment and volunteer about 10-15 hours a month. Educational surrogates oversee the educational needs of foster children by attending parent-teacher conferences and advocating for educational services. The next information session will be Dec. 2. For information, call (858) 569-2019, or log on to www.voices4children.com.

Families Learn About Preparedness

Earthquakes, floods, blackouts, terrorist attacks – are you and your family ready? A number of Encinitas families now have more preparedness information thanks to a recent community forum hosted by Third District Supervisor Pam Slater. More than 150 people attended the forum, learning about local disaster response plans and how to create their own family preparedness plan. (Learn how to create your own plan as the Office of Emergency Services Web site, sdcounty.ca.gov/oes, and click on Terrorism Awareness.) The Encinitas forum was organized by the Health and Human Services Agency Coastal and North Inland regions and a number of community partners.

Helping People Get to Work

"Disability Benefits 101" trainings held last month were recognized by Chairman Greg Cox as part of national Disability Awareness Month. More than 200 attendees learned how to navigate the myriad disability employment assistance programs, including the innovative "Ticket to Work," which rolls out this month. It reduces barriers to employment for people with disabilities so they can earn money at a job without losing health coverage. HHSA and DHR staff helped facilitate the local trainings.

Parks Unveils New Logo

The Department of Parks and Recreation recently unveiled a new department logo. This new logo is designed to communicate the department's commitment to preserve significant natural and cultural resources while providing high-quality parks and recreation experiences for San Diego County residents and visitors. The new logo features three green, stair-step plant figures that hint towards representing various ages of people beneath a golden sun.



Ribbon-Cutting for New Assessor's Office

County Supervisor Ron Roberts, CAO Walt Ekard and Assessor/Recorder/Clerk Greg Smith were among the dignitaries cutting the ribbon at the ARC's new Kearny Mesa office last month. The office is at 9225 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. in a County-owned building, and replaces the department's former leased space. A wide range of services will be available, including parcel maps,

Firestorm 2003



A volunteer and a U.S. Border Patrol officer unload a horse at the Lakeside Rodeo Grounds.

A volunteer leads a horse at the Lakeside Rodeo Grounds, where horses were evacuated during the Cedar Fire.



A Sheriff's deputy carries a box of food at the Lakeside Rodeo Grounds.

Continued on next page

Firestorm 2003



A row of fire trucks at Gillespie Field, which was used as a staging area for firefighters.

A Blackhawk helicopter at Gillespie Field.



On duty at the County Emergency Operations Center.